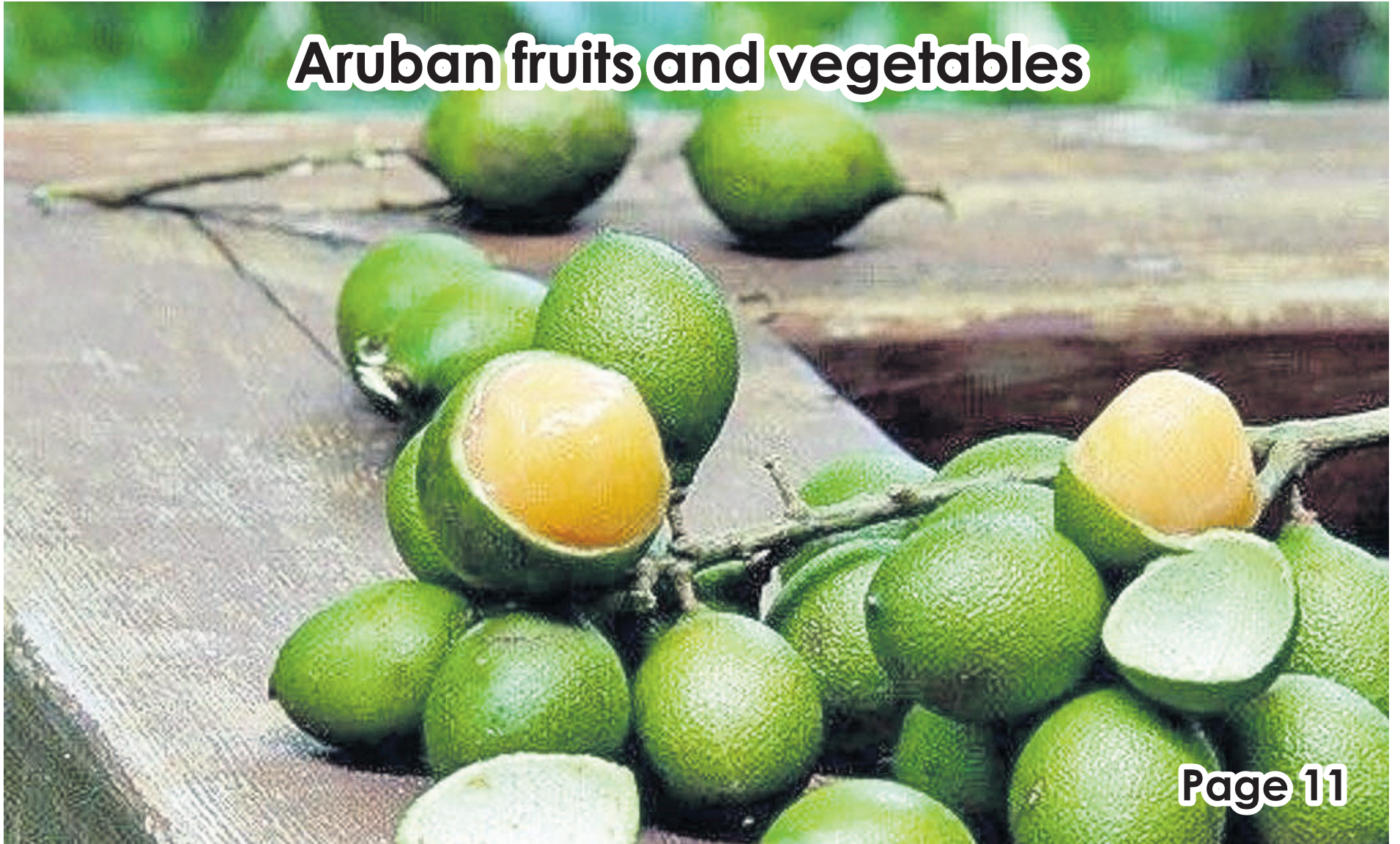


## Aruban fruits and vegetables



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### LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

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**SUNDAY:**

**MARRYBELL MADURO**  
SINGER  
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

**MONDAY:**

**ANDERSON BAHAMON**  
SINGER  
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

**TUESDAY:**

**JEAN PAUL**  
SAXOPHONIST  
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

**WEDNESDAY:**

**MAILLEYN ALVARADO**  
VIOLINIST  
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

**THURSDAY:**

**MARRYBELL MADURO**  
SINGER  
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

**FRIDAY:**

**MAILLEYN ALVARADO**  
VIOLINIST  
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

**SATURDAY:**

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## Trump overturned decades of U.S. trade policy in 2025. See the impact of his tariffs, in four charts

By **WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS** and **PAUL WISEMAN**  
**AP Business Writers**

Since returning to the White House in January, President Donald Trump has overturned decades of U.S. trade policy — building a wall of tariffs around what used to be a wide open economy. His double-digit taxes on imports from almost every country have disrupted global commerce and strained the budgets of consumers and businesses worldwide. They have also raised tens of billions of dollars for the U.S. Treasury.

Trump has argued that his steep new import taxes are necessary to bring back wealth that was "stolen" from the U.S. He says they will narrow America's decades-old trade deficit and bring manufacturing back to the country. But upending the global supply chain has proven



**President Donald Trump speaks during an event to announce new tariffs in the Rose Garden at the White House, on April 2, 2025, in Washington.**

**Associated Press**

costly for households facing rising prices. And the erratic way the president rolled out his tariffs — announcing them, then suspending or altering them before conjuring up new ones — made 2025 one of the most turbulent economic years in recent memory.

Here's a look at the impact of Trump's tariffs over the last year, in four charts.

Effective U.S. tariff rate  
 A key number for the overall impact of tariffs on U.S. consumers and businesses is the "effective" tariff rate — which, unlike headline figures imposed by Trump for

specific trade actions, provides an average based on the actual imports coming into the country.

In 2025, per data from the Yale Budget Lab, the effective U.S. tariff rate peaked in April. But it's still far higher than the average seen at the start of the year. Before finalizing shifts in consumption, November's effective tariff rate was nearly 17% — seven times greater than January's average and the highest seen since 1935.

Tariff revenue vs America's trade deficit

Among selling points to justify his tariffs, Trump has repeatedly said they would reduce America's longstanding trade deficit and bring revenue into the Treasury.

Trump's higher tariffs are certainly raising money. They've raked in more than \$236 billion this year through November — much more

than in years past. But they still account for just a fraction of the federal government's total revenue. And they haven't raised nearly enough to justify the president's claim that tariff revenue could replace federal income taxes — or allow for windfall dividend checks for Americans.

The U.S. trade deficit, meanwhile, has fallen significantly since the start of the year. The trade gap peaked to a monthly record of \$136.4 billion in March, as consumers and businesses hurried to import foreign products before Trump could impose his tariffs on them. The trade gap narrowed to \$52.8 billion in September, the latest month for which data is available. But the year-to-date deficit was still running 17% ahead of January-September 2024. Import shifts with America's biggest trading partners



**Three of Deepwater Wind's five turbines stand in the water off Block Island, R.I., Aug. 15, 2016.**

**Associated Press**

**NORFOLK, Va. (AP)** — The developers of a Virginia offshore wind project are asking a federal judge to block a Trump administra-

tion order that halted construction of their project, along with four others, over national security concerns. Dominion Energy Virginia

## Virginia offshore wind developer sues over Trump administration order halting projects

said in its lawsuit filed late Tuesday that the government's order is "arbitrary and capricious" and unconstitutional. The Richmond-based company is developing Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind, a project it says is essential to meet dramatically growing energy needs driven by dozens of new data centers.

The Interior Department did not detail the security concerns in blocking the five projects on Monday. In a letter to project developers, Interior's Bureau of Ocean

Energy Management set a 90-day period — and possibly longer — "to determine whether the national security threats posed by this project can be adequately mitigated." The other projects are the Vineyard Wind project under construction in Massachusetts, Revolution Wind in Rhode Island and Connecticut and two projects in New York: Sunrise Wind and Empire Wind. Democratic governors in those states have vowed to fight the order, the latest action by the Trump admin-

istration to hobble offshore wind in its push against renewable energy sources. Dominion's project has been under construction since early 2024 and was scheduled to come online early next year, providing enough energy to power about 660,000 homes. The company said the delay was costing it more than \$5 million a day in losses solely for the ships used in round-the-clock construction, and that customers or the company would eventually bear the cost.



# U.S. launches strikes against Islamic State group in Nigeria after attacks target Christians

By WILL WEISSERT

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump said the United States launched a "powerful and deadly" strike against forces of the Islamic State group in Nigeria, after spending weeks accusing the West African country's government of failing to rein in the targeting of Christians.

In a Christmas evening post on his social media site Thursday, Trump did not provide details or mention the extent of the damage caused by the strikes in the northwestern state of Sokoto.

A Defense Department official, who insisted on anonymity to discuss details not made public, said the U.S. worked with Nigeria to carry out the strikes and that they'd been approved by Abuja.

Nigeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the cooperation included exchange of intelligence and strategic coordination in ways "consistent with international law, mutual respect for sovereignty and shared commitments to regional and global security."

The Associated Press could not confirm the extent of the strikes' impact.

Nigeria fights several armed groups



People visit the site of a U.S. airstrike in Northwest, Jabo, Nigeria, Friday, Dec. 26, 2025.

Associated Press

Nigeria is battling multiple armed groups, including at least two affiliated with IS, an offshoot of the Boko Haram extremist group known as the Islamic State West Africa Province in the northeast, and the less-known Lakurawa group prominent in the northwestern states, where the gangs use large swathes of forests as hideouts.

Security analysts said the target of the U.S. strikes could be the Lakurawa group, which in the last year has increasingly become lethal in the region, often targeting remote

communities and security forces.

"Lakurawa is a group that is actually controlling territories in Nigeria, in Sokoto state and in other states like Kebbi," said Malik Samuel, a Nigerian security researcher at Good Governance Africa. "In the northwest, there has been the incursion of violent extremist groups that are ideologically driven," he said, blaming the incursion on the near absence of the state and security forces in hot spots.

Violence affecting Nigerians

Trump said the airstrikes were launched against IS militants "who have been targeting and viciously killing, primarily, innocent Christians." Residents and security analysts have said Nigeria's security crisis affects both Christians, predominant in the south, and Muslims, who are the majority in the north.

"Terrorist violence in any form, whether directed at Christians, Muslims or other communities, remains an affront to Nigeria's values and to international peace and security," the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

said. Nigeria's government has previously said in response to Trump's criticisms that people of many faiths, not just Christians, have suffered attacks at the hands of extremist groups.

U.S. measures affecting Nigeria

Trump ordered the Pentagon last month to begin planning for potential military action in Nigeria to try and curb what he called Christian persecution. The State Department recently announced it would restrict visas for Nigerians and their family members involved in killing Christians there.

And the U.S. recently designated Nigeria a "country of particular concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act.

Trump said U.S. defense officials had "executed numerous perfect strikes, as only the United States is capable of doing" and added that "our Country will not allow Radical Islamic Terrorism to prosper."

Nigeria's population of 220 million is split almost equally between Christians and Muslims. The country has long faced insecurity from various fronts, including Boko Haram, which seeks to establish its radical interpretation of Islamic law and has also targeted Muslims it deems not Muslim enough. □

## Pediatrics group sues HHS for cutting funds for children's health programs

By LAURA UNGAR

AP Medical Writer

The American Academy of Pediatrics sued the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on Wednesday, seeking to block nearly \$12 million in cuts to the group.

Earlier this month, the federal government "abruptly terminated" grants to the group, the lawsuit says.

The funding supported numerous public health programs, including efforts to prevent sudden unexpected infant death, strengthen pediatric care in rural communities and support teens facing substance use and mental health challenges.

"AAP does not have other sources of grant funding to replace the federal awards, and without the necessary funds it must immediately terminate its work on its dozens of programs that save children's lives every day," says the lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. "Within a few weeks, AAP will have to begin laying off employees dedicated to this critically important work."

The suit alleges HHS made the cuts in retaliation for the doctors' group speaking out against the Trump administration's positions and actions.

The doctors' group has

been vocal about its support for pediatric vaccines and has publicly opposed HHS positions. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. — who helped lead the anti-vaccine movement for years — is seeking to broadly remake federal policies on vaccines. Earlier this year, the pediatrics group released its own recommendations on COVID-19 vaccines, which substantially diverged from the government's recommendations. The group also supports access to gender-affirming care and has publicly criticized HHS positions on the topic, saying it opposes what it calls the govern-

ment's infringements on the doctor-patient relationship. "The Department of Health and Human Services is using federal funding as a political weapon to punish protected speech, trying to silence one of the nation's most trusted voices for children's well-being by cutting off critical public-health funding in retaliation for speaking the truth," Skye Perryman, president and CEO of Democracy Forward, said in a statement. Perryman's organization is representing the doctors' group in the case.

A spokesman for HHS could not immediately be reached for comment.

Mark Del Monte, CEO and executive vice president of the 67,000-member doctors' group, said the organization depends on its relationship with the federal government.

"We need this partnership to advance policies that prioritize children's health. These vital child health programs fund services like hearing screenings for newborns and safe sleep campaigns to prevent sudden unexpected infant death," he said in a statement. "We are forced to take legal action today so that these programs can continue to make communities safer and healthier." □



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## New storm hitting waterlogged Southern California could bring mudslides and high surf

By TY ONEIL

Associated Press

WRIGHTWOOD, Calif. (AP)

— California, soaked from days of relentless rain and recovering from mudslides in mountain towns, was hit with another powerful storm Christmas Day that led to evacuation warnings and high surf advisories.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department in Southern California issued an evacuation warning for Wrightwood, a mountain town about 80 miles (130 kilometers) northeast of Los Angeles, a day after rescuing people trapped in cars during a mud slide.

The National Weather Service said waves near the San Francisco Bay Area could reach up to 25 feet (7.6 meters) Friday.

Statewide, more than 70,000 people were without power Thursday afternoon, according to PowerOutage.us. A day ago, heavy rain and fierce winds were blamed for at least two deaths.

A major storm system mov-



A car is buried in mud after a series of storms Thursday, Dec. 25, 2025, in Wrightwood, Calif.

Associated Press

ing toward the Midwest and Northeast was expected to interfere with travel, according to the National Weather Service.

A mix of freezing rain and sleet could create icy conditions in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Maryland.

Forecasters warned heavy ice could cause outages. Snow was expected to blanket the Northeast early Friday.

Roads in the 5,000-resident California town of Wrightwood were covered in rocks, debris and thick mud

on Thursday. With power out, a gas station and coffee shop running on generators were serving as hubs for residents and visitors.

"It's really a crazy Christmas," said Jill Jenkins, who was spending the holiday with her 13-year-old grandson,

Hunter Lopiccolo.

Lopiccolo said the family almost evacuated the previous day, when water washed away a chunk of their backyard. But they decided to stay and still celebrated the holiday. Lopiccolo got a new snowboard and e-bike.

"We just played card games all night with candles and flashlights," he said.

Davey Schneider hiked a mile and a half (1.6 kilometers) through rain and floodwater up to his shins from his Wrightwood residence Wednesday to rescue cats from his grandfather's house.

"I wanted to help them out because I wasn't confident that they were going to live," Schneider said Thursday. "Fortunately, they all lived. They're all okay — just a little bit scared."

Arlene Corte said roads in town turned into rivers, but her house was not damaged.

"It could be a whole lot worse," she said. "We're here talking." □

## Scrapyard worker injured in UPS plane crash dies on Christmas, raising deaths to 15



Allen Wilson, right, hugs an attendee after writing on crosses for victims during a vigil Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025, in Louisville, Ky., after a UPS plane crashed at Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport.

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — A man injured in last month's fiery UPS cargo plane crash in Kentucky died on Christmas Day, raising the death toll from the crash to 15, officials announced late Thursday.

Alain Rodriguez Colina worked at a scrapyard that was devastated when the departing cargo plane, fully loaded with fuel for a flight to Hawaii, plowed into businesses just outside Louisville's airport on Nov. 4. Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear and Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg con-

formed his death via social media.

"Alain is the 15th victim of the UPS Flight 2976 accident," Greenberg said. "He suffered severe injuries at the time of the crash and passed earlier this Christmas Day. May Alain's memory be a blessing."

Grade A Auto Parts & Recycling owner and CEO Sean Garber confirmed to WAVE-TV that Colina was one of the company's employees. Workers at the scrapyard have described the scramble to help survivors of the crash's mas-

sive explosion, which killed three other employees as well as customers.

Dramatic video captured the aircraft crashing into businesses and erupting in a fireball.

Three pilots and multiple people on the ground were killed outside Muhammad Ali International Airport, where UPS has its largest package delivery hub, after the plane's left engine detached. Cracks were later found where the engine connected to the wing, the National Transportation Safety Board said. □



# Zelenskyy says he will meet with Trump in Florida on Sunday for talks on Ukraine security guarantees

By ILLIA NOVIKOV

Associated Press

**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)** — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Friday that he will meet with U.S. President Donald Trump in Florida over the weekend.

Zelenskyy told journalists that the two leaders will discuss security guarantees for Ukraine during Sunday's talks, and that the 20-point plan under discussion "is about 90% ready."

An "economic agreement" also will be discussed, Zelenskyy said, but that he was unable to confirm "whether anything will be finalized by the end."

The Ukrainian side will also raise "territorial issues", he said. Zelenskyy said that Ukraine "would like the Europeans to be involved," but doubted whether it would be possible at short notice. "We must, without doubt, find some format in the near future in which not only Ukraine and the U.S. are present, but Europe is represented as well," he said. The announced meeting is the latest development in an extensive U.S.-led diplomatic push to end the nearly four-year Russia-Ukraine war, but efforts have run into sharply conflicting demands by Moscow and Kyiv.

Zelenskyy's comments came



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy speaks during a media conference at the EU Summit in Brussels, Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025.

after he said Thursday that he had a "good conversation" with U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Friday that the Kremlin had already been in contact with U.S. representatives since Russian presidential envoy Kirill Dmitriev recently met with U.S. envoys in Florida.

"It was agreed upon to continue the dialogue," he said. Trump is engaged in a diplomatic push to end Russia's

all-out war, which began on Feb. 24, 2022, but his efforts have run into sharply conflicting demands by Moscow and Kyiv. Zelenskyy said Tuesday that he would be willing to withdraw troops from Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland as part of a plan to end the war, if Russia also pulls back and the area becomes a demilitarized zone monitored by international forces. Though Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Thursday that there had been

"slow but steady progress" in the peace talks, Russia has given no indication that it will agree to any kind of withdrawal from land it has seized.

In fact, Moscow has insisted that Ukraine relinquish the remaining territory it still holds in the Donbas — an ultimatum that Ukraine has rejected. Russia has captured most of Luhansk and about 70% of Donetsk — the two areas that make up the Donbas. On the ground, one person was killed and three oth-

ers were wounded when a guided aerial bomb hit a house in Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region, while six people were wounded in a missile strike on the city of Uman, local officials said Friday.

Russian drone attacks on the city of Mykolaiv and its suburbs overnight into Friday left part of the city without power. Energy and port infrastructure were damaged by drones in the city of Odesa on the Black Sea.

Meanwhile, Ukraine said that it struck a major Russian oil refinery on Thursday using U.K.-supplied Storm Shadow missiles.

Ukraine's General Staff said that its forces hit the Novoshakhtinsk refinery in Russia's Rostov region.

"Multiple explosions were recorded. The target was hit," it wrote on Telegram.

Rostov regional Gov. Yuri Slyusar said that a firefighter was wounded when extinguishing the fire.

Ukraine's long-range drone strikes on Russian refineries aim to deprive Moscow of the oil export revenue it needs to pursue its full-scale invasion. Russia wants to cripple the Ukraine's power grid, seeking to deny civilians access to heat, light and running water in what Ukrainian officials say is an attempt to "weaponize winter." □

Associated Press

## Korean prosecutors seek 10-year sentence for ousted President Yoon in first martial law trial

By HYUNG-JIN KIM

Associated Press

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)** — An independent counsel on Friday demanded a 10-year prison term for South Korea's ousted President Yoon Suk Yeol in the first of seven criminal cases related to his ill-fated attempt to impose martial law in 2024 and other allegations stemming from his time in office. The first of Yoon's trials to wrap up covers charges, including defiance of authorities' attempts to investigate and detain him. Yoon's lawyers called the 10-year term request "ex-

cessive" and accused independent counsel Cho Eun-suk's team of being politically driven and lacking legal grounds to demand such a harsh punishment. The court is expected to render a verdict as early as next month.

Yoon faces other trials on accusations ranging from corruption and favor trading to rebellion, a grave charge that is punishable by life imprisonment or the death penalty. The rebellion trial is also nearing an end. Yoon's martial law enactment brought armed troops into Seoul streets

and triggered South Korea's most serious political crisis in decades.

The martial law lasted only a few hours, as lawmakers managed to enter the National Assembly and voted to lift it. Yoon was impeached by the opposition-controlled parliament in December 2024, before he was formally dismissed as president following a Constitutional Court ruling in April.

On Friday, independent counsel Cho's team requested the Seoul Central District Court to sentence Yoon to 10 years in prison



South Korea's impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol attends a hearing of his impeachment trial at the Constitutional Court in Seoul, South Korea, Feb. 11, 2025.

Associated Press

on charges of obstruction of official duties, abuse of power, falsification of official documents and destruction of evidence.

Park Eok-su, a senior investigator on Cho's team,

called Yoon's actions "an unprecedented obstruction of official duties" during Friday's court session. Yoon's lawyers have said the detainment warrant was invalid and illegal. □



# Algeria votes to declare French colonization a crime and demands restitution

**ALGIERS, Algeria (AP)** — Legislators in Algeria voted to declare France's colonization of the North African country a crime, approving a law that calls for restitution of property taken by France during its 130-year rule, among other demands seeking to redress historical wrongs.

France slammed the law as a "hostile act" threatening bilateral efforts to heal wounds of the past. The two countries retain close cultural and economic ties but have troubled diplomatic relations.

In a solemn ceremony steeped in symbolism, 340 of 407 members of Algeria's National Assembly voted late Wednesday to approve the law. The move came just a few weeks after African countries made a collective resolution for recognition and reparations for colonial-era crimes.

The law covers the period from the landing of King Charles X's army on the beaches of Sidi Ferruch west of Algiers in 1830 to July 5, 1962, the date of Algeria's official independence.

The text provides for the restitution of Algerian archives and property moved to France during the colonial period, and the transmission to Algiers of detailed maps



**Parliament members vote on a bill seeking to criminalize France's colonisation, considering it a "state crime," and demanding that France issue an official apology and take legal responsibility for its colonial past in addition to compensations, Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2025 at her National Assembly in Algiers.**

of French nuclear tests conducted in Algeria from 1960 to 1966. It also calls for the repatriation of the remains of some Algerian resistance fighters taken to France.

The law stipulates prison sentences for any action by an Algerian celebrating French colonialism, for attacks on symbols of the Algerian resistance, and "remarks with colonial connotations."

France is unlikely to heed the demands in the law. The law is "a manifestly hostile initiative," the French Foreign Ministry spokesperson's office said in a statement to

The Associated Press. It noted efforts under French President Emmanuel Macron to address colonial-era grievances, and added: "We continue to work toward the renewal of dialogue," notably about security and migration issues.

Macron, in 2017, described elements of France's history in Algeria as a crime against humanity, but stopped short of an official apology. Meanwhile, the resurgent far right in France celebrates colonialists.

The economic cost of colonialism in Africa is believed

to be staggering. Algeria suffered some of the most brutal forms of French colonial rule.

Nearly a million European settlers held greater political, economic and social privileges, even though Algeria was legally part of France and its men were conscripted in World War II. Hundreds of thousands died in Algeria's revolution, during which French forces tortured detainees, disappeared suspects and devastated villages as part of a counterinsurgency strategy to maintain their grip on

power. Huge Algerian flags adorned the lower house of parliament as speaker Mohamed Boughali delivered his opening address Wednesday.

"Today, December 24, 2025, is a historic day, to be written in letters of gold in the national narrative," he began, before being interrupted by lawmakers intoning an excerpt from the Algerian national anthem: "O France, the hour of reckoning has arrived ... we have sworn to revive Algeria, bear witness! Bear witness!"

The speaker called the law, "a political message and an explicit moral stance."

Government officials, professors, and former members of parliament who championed the bill were all invited to the ceremony. As the speaker declared the law adopted, shouts of "Allahu Akbar!" and "Tahya Al Djazair!" (Long live Algeria!) rose from the floor.

"This is a special day for me, full of emotion and pride. Today marks the culmination of a long struggle that we began in 2001 with fellow members of parliament, for the memory and honor of all those who fought against French colonization," Mohamed Arezki Ferrad, a former lawmaker who initiated the bill, told the AP. □

**Associated Press**



**ASEAN Foreign Ministers' meeting convenes Monday, Dec. 22, 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to resume ceasefire talks after deadly border clashes between Thailand and Cambodia.**

**Associated Press**

**By WASAMON AUDJARINT**  
**Associated Press**

**BANGKOK (AP)** — Thailand and Cambodia were engaged in combat along their border on Friday, even

as the two countries held talks to try to put an end to armed clashes that erupted in early December, breaking a ceasefire that had been reached five months earlier.

## Thailand bombs a village in Cambodia even as both nations hold border talks to end armed clashes

Cambodia's Defense Ministry said that Thailand deployed F-16 fighter jets to drop around 40 bombs on a village in the northwestern province of Banteay Meanchey.

There were no immediate reports of casualties, but the ministry said that houses and infrastructure were destroyed.

Thailand's military confirmed the attack, saying that a joint army-air force operation was essential to protect Thailand's Sa Kaeo province, which borders Banteay Meanchey and where the

two nations have overlapping territorial claims.

Long-standing competing claims of territory along the border are the root of tensions that broke into open combat in late July. Mediation by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, backed up by pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump, led the two sides to agree to a shaky ceasefire after five days of fighting.

Each side describes its current military actions as being taken in self-defense, and blames the other for breaching the ceasefire.

"If Cambodia is not sincere about a ceasefire, peace will not be possible, and Thailand will have no choice but to proceed with full-scale military operations to defend its sovereignty," Air Marshal Jackkrit Thammavichai, a spokesperson for Thailand's air force, said Friday.

Military officials of both nations, meanwhile, held a third day of working-level talks of their already established General Border Committee at a checkpoint between Cambodia's Pailin province and Thailand's Chanthaburi province. □





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### Museum of Industry Aruba

The Museum of Industry in located in San Nicolas. This museum presents the history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased



by the Monuments fund in 2003 so it could be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruban Museum Foundation (FMA), which is a foundation that maintains, preserves, and protects the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm.

For more information check out their Facebook page: Museum of Industry Aruba.

### Archaeological Museum of Aruba

The Archaeological Museum of Aruba is located at Schelpstraat 42 in downtown Oranjestad. The renovated historic Ecury com-

plex in downtown Oranjestad has been transformed from a family home to a modern museum that preserves Aruba's Amerindian cultural heritage. This 21st century museum is especially designed to preserve valuable artifacts dating back to the Pre-Ceramic period of 2500 BC.

In the late 1980's AMA identified its need for an adequate housing for its collection and activities. After studying various options, a project proposal was drawn up, including the acquisition and restoration of historical buildings in downtown Oranjestad.

These historical buildings were formerly the property of the Ecury family. The "Ecury Complex", is a cluster of single and two-story historic buildings, mainly Dutch colonial architecture from the late 19th and 20th century on a plot of approximately 1,700 m2.



In 1997 the Aruban Government bought the complex for the National Archaeological Museum project. In 2004 a financial agreement was signed with the European Development Fund and in 2006 restoration and construction work began on the monumental buildings and the new to build exhibition space. In December 2007 the key to the complex was delivered and the museum's employees moved to the new location. The final design for the exhibit was completed in November 2007 and the permanent exhibit, financed by the Aruban Government and the Union of Cultural Organizations (UNOCA), opened in July 2009.

At the new location the National Archaeological Museum Aruba uses approximately 500 m2 for its permanent exhibit. This exhibit showcases archaeological objects and conveys modern exhibition techniques information on the origin and culture of the first inhabitants of the island. The new permanent exhibit gives the visitor an insight into the cultures that inhabited the island in Pre-Historical and Early Historical times. The museum regularly hosts public seminars, special exhibitions and workshop for visitors to enjoy.

The museum is open daily from 9 am till 5 pm. For more information check out the Facebook page National Archaeological Museum Aruba or website: [www.manaruba.org](http://www.manaruba.org)

Editor's note: Pictures are property of the respective museums. □



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## Visit the historic museum at Fort Zoutman!

(Oranjestad)—Located in the middle of downtown Oranjestad, situated right next to the government building "Cocolishi", is one of the oldest buildings of Aruba: Fort Zoutman. First constructed in 1796, this site has been used (or left unused) in many ways and have survived eras of war and attempted dismantling.



also became a bell tower.

When anyone refers to Fort Zoutman, they are actually referring to two separate buildings that, over the years, have been merged: the fort and the tower. That's right, the iconic 5-story, squared tower was not part of the original structure of the fort, and is actually called "Willem III Toren". Constructed in 1867, this tower was named after the then-reigning king of The Netherlands, Willem III. Willem III Toren was originally a light tower, but after a request from Lieutenant Governor Jan Helenus in 1866, it

The fort itself was originally constructed to protect the commerce bay of Paardenbaai from pirates and other disreputable characters roaming the Caribbean Sea. Unlike the Willem III Toren, Fort Zoutman had a more tumultuous past, including the on-and-off reception of unwanted members of the English military several times (The Netherlands was at constant war with England back in the colonial era). Over the years, both the fort and the tower had functioned as different

government center points, including a tax and stamps office. For some time these two buildings also housed a police precinct and jail, and even experienced abandonment until the Cultural Center Aruba Foundation (CCA) petitioned for its renovation in 1964, turning the site into the Historic Museum it currently is.

Despite its small size, The Historic Museum guards a rich depository of the commercial, military and social history of Oranjestad, offering a glance into how the social culture of the town came to be. If you are in-



terested in history and want to learn more about Aruba, then Fort Zoutman should definitely be included into your itinerary.

The museum is open Monday to Friday from 9am-6pm, and Saturday from 10am-2pm.

Source: The Old Fort of Aruba by Jan Hartog. □



## Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect

our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that you have to pay before leaving. This would surely not be a pleasant experience. Though we love



to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the

respect it deserves by protecting our environment.

Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □



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## Ayo & Casibari: Aruba's famous rock formations

(Oranjestad)—The Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations are known locally as one of the crucial sites to have in your "off-road" trip itinerary. These naturally formed rock formations as just one of the few places on the island that hold a rich history of our culture and of our ancestors.

### Ayo

The Ayo Rock Formation is located in the northern part of the island, right on the road that leads you to the Black Stone Beach, and close to the Natural Bridge. The Ayo is a fenced terrain that consists of several giant boulders, resting neatly on top of or side by side each other, adding gorgeous natural architecture to the surrounding "mondi". This is also one of the few sites to contain prehistoric markings of our indigenous an-



cestors. The Ayo Rock formation contains stairs that lead you to the top of the highest boulder, offering a breath-taking view of the Aruban backyard. The Ayo is usually quiet, as it is situated farther away from the busier parts of the island. However, this is just another charm of the site: the quiet area and the refreshing breeze offer a sense of comfort and peace.

### Casibari

Probably the busier rock formation site, the Casibari is situated more in the center of the island, much closer—and more accessible—to the general public. Just like Ayo, Casibari is a fenced area containing several boulders that lay on top or lean on each other. The best aspect of the Casibari Rock Formation is the accompanying view when

you climb up the top of the round, flat bolder. For this position, you can see the majority of the island and the ocean in the south.

Both sites are open free to the public, 24 hours a day. However, unless you are taking a trip with a professional tour guide, there are no guides at the sites to

help you climb the rock. So, do be careful when trudging on the boulders, and make sure to befriend any roaming goats you see along the way!

\*Mondi: what we call our Aruban wilderness. We don't have forests, or deserts, but we do have mon-di!



## Fun facts about cacti hedges "Trankera"

(Oranjestad) – When off-roading in inland Aruba, you may notice some cacti hedges around various properties or lined up by certain pathways. These man-made hedges are called "trankera" and play an important role in maintaining our flora and fauna.

The trankera dates to colonialism, where settlers established several 'cunucu' (farm) on the island. People either used stone walls or trankera as a fence to ward off strangers and wild animals that can feed on the cunucu vegetation or

cattle.

Nowadays, trankeras are less common, and those that still stand are often not maintained. On the surface this seems like a bad development, however this proved to be beneficial for our flora and fauna. Naturally developed flora around the hedges offers more shelter for fauna. Another aspect is the propagation process. When pruning hedges, flowers and seeds were removed, which limits propagation to a minimum.

So, though trankeras don't



play that big of a role in Aruba's agriculture any-

more, our environment still reaps the benefits of these

long-standing natural structures.





Article by Etnia Nativa

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**Episode335 - CCCXXXV**

## The Enduring Rhythm of Dande

**Etnia Nativa explores the island's indigenous culture and the knowledge passed down by its earliest inhabitants. This includes survival techniques, the use of plants for healing, practical skills, celestial navigation, and an understanding of weather patterns. These traditions have been transmitted across generations and continue to shape Aruba's cultural identity today. The island's heritage is deeply rooted in the enduring connection between its people, their knowledge, and our beloved rock.**

In this episode shares the history of a musical rhythm that is the soul of Aruba's New Year: Dande.

As the final seconds of the year fade and a new one is welcomed, Aruba comes alive with a sound that is unlike any other in the world—the rhythmic heart-beat of Dande. Deeply rooted in tradition and community, Dande is far more than music; it is Aruba's living expression of unity, respect, and hope for the year ahead will bring abundant rain, health, peace and prosperity.

Although the exact origin of Dande remains uncertain, historians estimate that the rhythm began resonating across the island around 1880. Oral histories passed down through generations suggest that Dande may have been influenced by Arubans returning from Cuba, particularly during a time when many of them traveled abroad to work in agricultural fields. Whatever its beginnings, one truth remains clear: Dande is

uniquely Aruban, found nowhere else on Earth.

The name Dande comes from the word "dandare," meaning to go from one place to another—a fitting description of a tradition built on movement and connection. Another iconic phrase, "Ay nobe," commonly heard in Dande songs, is believed to stem from the Spanish Año Nuevo (New Year), as no direct equivalent exists in the Papiamentu language.

Traditionally, the celebration began after the clock struck midnight on New Year's Eve. Small musical groups traveled from house to house, spreading blessings and good wishes through song. Early Dande ensembles were simple yet powerful, consisting of a drummer, a wiri player, and a singer. Over time, the sound evolved, welcoming instruments such as the cuarta, guitar, mandolin, accordion, violin, and eventually bass, which helped shape the rhythm of Dande. In those early days, some participants even journeyed on donkeys, first visiting relatives before moving on to friends and neighbors—each home

becoming part of a shared island-wide celebration. Musicians were treated with deep respect. They performed at the entrance or front yard's home and only entered if the homeowner personally invited them inside. If not, the group moved on without offense or insistence. Once welcomed, a beautiful ritual followed. The singer would remove his hat—a gesture of respect toward the household and family, not, as often mistakenly believed, to receive money. The song would then be sung first to the head of the household, followed by the lady of the home, and then each child, even the youngest, ensuring that everyone felt included in the blessing.

Musically, Dande holds a special place in Aruba's cultural heritage. Though written in 6/8 time, similar to the tomb rhythm, Dande maintains its own unmistakable identity through its instrumentation and rhythmic structure.

The Dande tradition did not end on New Year's Day. These musical visits continued until January 6, marking "Dia di Tres Rey" (Three Kings Day), a significant celebration in the Roman-Catholic calendar.

Dande remains a powerful symbol of Aruba's cultural resilience—an echo of the past that still fills the present with joy, respect, and shared hope. As long as its rhythm is played and its songs are sung, the spirit of Aruba's New Year will continue to travel from home to home, just as it has for generations.

While the island's pristine beaches and luxury resorts remain major attractions, more travelers today seek to understand Aruba's history and cultural evolution, appreciating both its natural beauty and the resilience that led to its so called prosperity. □



Image courtesy of Visit Aruba.

For those eager to uncover Aruba's past, Etnia Nativa offers guided cultural experiences that explore the island's roots, natural environment, and evolving traditions. Whether you are visiting for the first time or returning to rediscover its charms, this unique experience Etnia Nativa provides is a meaningful connection to the island's rich history.

Step beyond the beaches and resorts to engage with the heart and soul of Aruba's heritage visit Etnia Nativa, by appointment only:  
WhatsApp +297 592 2702  
etniana03@gmail.com



## Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost

### Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mango's hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.



#### Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

#### Kenepa

Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

#### Druif

There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit

that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

#### Shimarucu

Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

#### Tamarind

A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of



organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system.

#### Concomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Concomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

#### Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra be-



longs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

#### Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in

calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

#### Pampuna

In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruba is Sopi di Pampuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □



CROSSWORD

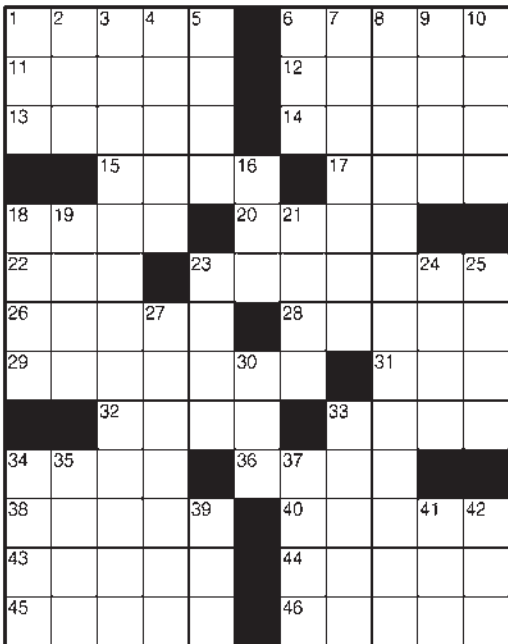
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 43 Go through many episodes  
1 Pluto's realm  
6 Stands  
11 Snowy wader  
12 Bakery come-on  
13 "— the Top"  
14 Pull out all the stops  
15 Wee bites  
17 Brooklyn team  
18 Quick jab  
20 Sub-standard  
22 Mathe-matician Lovelace  
23 Books in pews  
26 Vodka cocktail  
28 Useful skill  
29 Treason-ous fellow  
31 One or more  
32 Iditarod need  
33 Trojan War hero  
34 Bakery buy  
36 Pale tan  
38 Cus-tomary  
40 Skier's spot

DOWN

- 1 "You there!"  
2 Before today  
3 Blotto  
4 Spine-tingling  
5 Flight part  
6 Cloth scrap  
7 Some patches  
8 Very serious  
9 Give off  
10 Hangs low  
16 Bond, e.g.  
18 Accord  
19 Freshener target  
21 Poet Khayyám  
23 Table d'—  
24 Musical Horne  
25 River of 1-Across  
27 Odometer reading  
30 Praiseful poem  
33 Cheering loudly  
34 San Juan Hill setting  
35 Without repairs  
37 Staff symbol  
39 Headed  
41 Acquire  
42 Hosp. sections



1-6

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-6 CRYPTOQUOTE

U A V N Q K M G N I I J X G N H X

N M K T U G K M K M U G X

V N Q K L K I I J X F X D X D J X F X V .

— V F . M X S M M

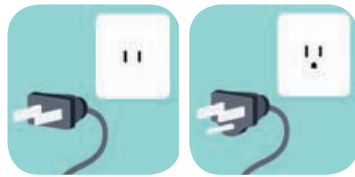
Cryptoquote: ASK NOT WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY. ASK WHAT'S FOR LUNCH. — ORSON WELLES

Cruise ship Schedule: Dec. 25 - 31 2025

|     |    |                                                                  | ARR                              | DEPT                           | BERTH            |                  |
|-----|----|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| THU | 25 | SERENADE OF THE SEAS<br>BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS<br>NORWEGIAN DAWN | 08.00<br>08.00<br>11.00          | 18.00<br>23.00<br>20.00        | B<br>C<br>I      | 1<br>1<br>1      |
| FRI | 26 | NORWEGIAN JEWEL<br>CARIBBEAN PRINCESS<br>ISLAND PRINCESS         | 07.00<br>09.00<br>09.00          | 20.00<br>22.00<br>18.00        | B<br>C<br>I      | 1<br>1<br>1      |
| SUN | 28 | MARELLA DISCOVERY<br>CELEBRITY ASCENT<br>FREEWINDS - Dept.       | 08.00<br>09.30<br>****           | 20.00<br>23.00<br>22.30        | B<br>C<br>E      | 1<br>1<br>-      |
| MON | 29 | SEABOURN OVATION<br>MARELLA DISCOVERY 2                          | 08.00<br>08.00                   | 22.00<br>20.00                 | B<br>C           | 1<br>1           |
| TUE | 30 | SERENADE OF THE SEAS<br>NORWEGIAN SKY<br>OASIS OF THE SEAS       | 08.00<br>13.30<br>08.00          | 23.00<br>22.30<br>23.00        | B<br>C<br>I      | 1<br>1<br>1      |
| WED | 31 | BRITANNIA<br>CARNIVAL VISTA<br>EXPLORER OF THE SEAS<br>FREEWINDS | 07.00<br>08.00<br>11.59<br>06.00 | 18.00<br>22.00<br>****<br>**** | B<br>C<br>I<br>E | 1<br>1<br>1<br>1 |

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



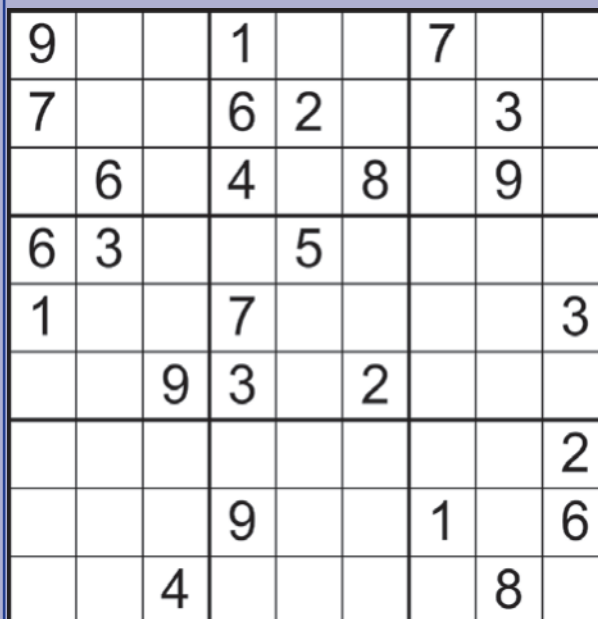
Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★★★

12/27

Answer to previous puzzle

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 2 |
| 5 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| 7 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 |
| 3 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 8 |
| 8 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 9 |
| 9 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| 4 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| 6 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 1 |

Difficulty: ★★★★★

12/26



## Doctor's orders? 'Belly laugh at least two to five days a week'



Model Eva Herzigova laughs as she attends the final Jean Paul Gaultier Haute Couture Spring/Summer 2020 fashion collection presented on Jan. 22, 2020, in Paris.

Associated Press

By ALBERT STUMM  
Associated Press

Melanie Bee curves her spine like a stretching cat as she lets out a maniacal, forced laugh.

The quick-fire pattern of manufactured giggles—"oh, hoo hoo hoo, eeh, ha ha ha"—soon ripples into genuine laughter, and she giddily kicks her feet.

She's practicing what she calls Laughasté, a hilarious yoga routine she created that is a descendant of "laughter clubs" that emerged in India in the 1990s. It feels awkward at first, but you fake it till you make it, she said.

"It's about allowing yourself to be OK with being awkward," said Bee, a Los Angeles comedian and speaker. "Then you're going to find some form of silliness within that is going to allow you to laugh involuntarily."

The laughter clubs were based on the common-sense notion that laughter relieves stress. But a good laugh is also good for your heart, immune system and many other health benefits, said Dr. Michael Miller, a cardiologist and medical professor at the University of Pennsylvania.

### The study of laughter

Although luminaries from the ancient Greeks to Freud have opined on the roots and implications of laughter, the modern study of laughter—gelotology—began emerging in the 1960s.

Stanford University psychologist William F. Fry, one of gelotology's founders, drew blood samples from himself while watching Laurel and Hardy. He discovered

that laughter increased the number of immune-boosting blood cells.

In 1995, Dr. Madan Kataria, a physician in Mumbai, got wind of the emerging research as editor of a health magazine while researching an article on stress management. To combat his own stress, he started the first daily laughter club in a park. It ballooned from a handful of participants to more than 150 within a month, he said. After the group quickly ran out of jokes, Kataria created exercises that activated the diaphragm, and he incorporated yogic breathing exercises, light stretches and deliberately silly sounds and movements.

"We were faking in the beginning and within seconds, everybody was in stitches," Kataria said.

### Why is laughter good for you?

Miller began studying laugh-

ter in the 1990s. Showing funny movies to study participants, he found that laughter produces endorphins in the brain that promote beneficial chemicals in the blood vessels. Nitric oxide, for example, causes blood vessels to dilate, which lowers blood pressure, inflammation and cholesterol. The combination reduces the risk for a heart attack, he said, and the endorphins are natural pain killers.

"When you've had a really good laugh, you feel very relaxed and light," said Miller, who is also chief of medicine at the Philadelphia Veterans Administration, where he is implementing a laughter therapy program. "It's like you've taken pain medication." Rosendhal completed a meta-analysis of 45 laughter studies, among other research, and found that laughter-inducing therapies decreased glucose levels, the stress hormone cortisol and chronic pain. They also improved mobility and overall mood, especially in older populations.

Because humor is subjective, it is hard to measure. That's why much of the more recent research has focused on laughter yoga and similar programs that provoke sustained bouts of laughter during 30- to 45-minute sessions, Rosendhal said.

Laughter yoga is particularly effective for people who might not feel like laughing, such as those struggling with depression or cancer pa-

tients, she said. With simulated laughter, the physiological mechanisms are the same, such as additional inhaling, exhaling and muscle activity that also improves mood.

"The well-being comes through the back door," she said. "You start with an exercise, and then the spontaneous laughter comes later because it's funny to see people laughing."

### How to laugh more

During a recent video call, Kataria said the trick is to learn to laugh for no reason. He and others in laughing yoga classes around the world have created hundreds of exercises that help. The simplest: Get together with another person, look in each other's eyes and repeat the sound "ha" for a full minute. Or try the "breathe in and laugh." Bring your hands to your chest on a deep inhale, hold your breath for three seconds, and burst out laughing on the exhale while extending your hands forward. □



### Editor

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### Editors

Pilar Flores  
Richard Brooks  
Angenette Figueroa  
Oriana Geerman

### Sales

Mark Gomes  
Sulaika Croes

### Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

### Distribution and Collection

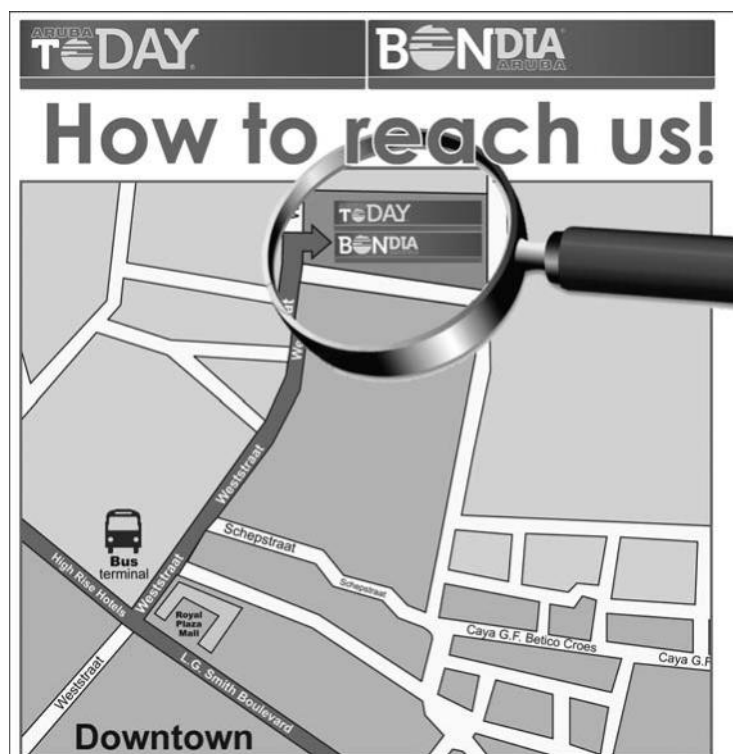
accounting@bondia.com

### Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22  
T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com  
W: www.arubatoday.com  
f @ArubaTodayNews



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### DOCTOR ON DUTY

#### Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm  
Tel. 527 4000

#### San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours  
Tel. 524 8833

### PHARMACY ON DUTY

#### Oranjestad:

Sta. Cruz: Tel. 585 8028

#### San Nicolas:

Centro Medico: Tel. 584 5794

### OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

### EMERGENCY

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Police         | 100      |
| Oranjestad     | 527 3140 |
| Noord          | 527 3200 |
| Sta. Cruz      | 527 2900 |
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| American Airlines | 582 2700 |
| Avianca           | 588 0059 |
| Jet Blue          | 588 2244 |
| Surinam           | 582 7896 |

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| FAVI- Visually Impaired               | Tel. 582 5051 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous                  | Tel. 736 2952 |
| Narcotics Anonymous                   | Tel. 583 8989 |
| Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional | Tel. 583 5400 |
| Centre for Diabetes                   | Tel. 524 8888 |
| Child Abuse Prevention                | Tel. 582 4433 |

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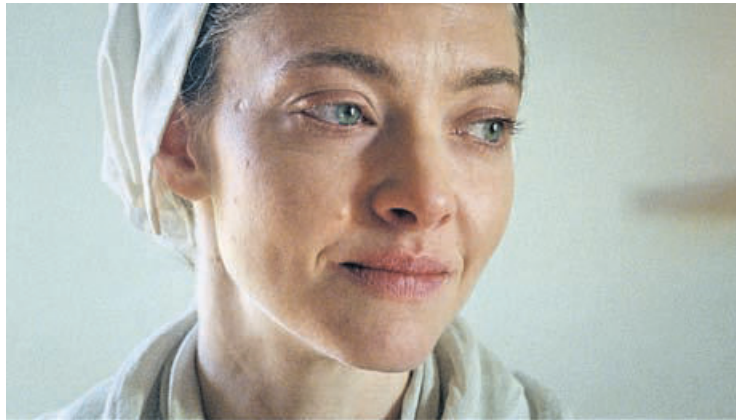


## Movie Review: In 'Testament of Ann Lee,' a blazing Amanda Seyfried can make you believe anything

By JOCELYN NOVECK  
AP National Writer

Filmmakers Mona Fastvold and Brady Corbet are clearly fascinated by ambition. They're fascinated, too, by dreamers — difficult dreamers, brilliant but demanding people who have plans they must fulfill no matter the personal cost.

They're also interested in dreamers who cross the ocean to America with these difficult, lofty plans. And, finally, they find singular actors to play these roles. You could say the couple, artistic and life partners, is on a roll. They together made "The Brutalist" last year, directed by Corbet and co-written with Fastvold, which won Adrien Brody an Oscar. And now, with Fastvold directing, we have "The Testament of Ann Lee" — a stirring and, yes, difficult movie that features a blazing Amanda Seyfried as the Shaker leader. It's a performance that will knock your 18th-century socks off. There are, of course, key differences. For one thing, unlike fictional architect László Tóth in "The Brutalist," Ann Lee was a real person — a woman whose life story hasn't been widely told (as the filmmakers have pointed out, people are more likely to remember the Shakers for their furniture design.) And



she was a deeply spiritual figure: a woman who from childhood had visions of God, rejected the urgings of the flesh as sinful, and was revered by followers who called her Mother and saw her as a female reincarnation of Jesus Christ.

Oh, yes, one other thing: "The Testament of Ann Lee" is a musical. An 18th-century religious musical — with both the agony (lots of agony) and ecstasy of Lee's life channeled into song-and-dance numbers based on a dozen or so traditional hymns.

Yes, it's a lot. It's lots and lots. The film is absolutely not for everyone.

But Fastvold has undeniably created something we've never quite seen before; speaking of visions, her singular artistic vision fills every frame. And Seyfried is a marvel, in yet another role that stretches this fiercely talented actor in ways we

might not have predicted. Fastvold, shooting on 70mm film as in "The Brutalist," and cowriter Corbet divide Lee's life into chapters. The first details her upbringing as a poor, illiterate child in Manchester, England. We're told it was no coincidence that a "miraculous" woman would be born on Feb. 29. The year is 1736. Ann, daughter of a blacksmith, has heavenly visions as a child. (She's also disgusted by the sight of her parents having sex.)

As a young woman, to escape the mill where her family works, Ann works as a nurse. Yearning for spiritual purpose, she attends a religious meeting and encounters a female preacher, something altogether new. The early Shakers — called the "Shaking Quakers of Manchester" — engage in an intense form of confession; the term "shaker" refers to their ecstatic gestures in worship, as if to shake off sin.

It's tough to imagine what the film would be like without Seyfried's grounding presence. She can be both spiritual and earthly, and when she breaks into song and dance, in numbers choreographed by Celia Rowleson-Hall to music by Daniel Blumberg (an Oscar winner for his "Brutalist" score), it feels organic and unforced. Ann marries a locksmith, with whom she births four babies. All die by age 1. It's almost too painful to watch, especially when her husband must tear away the last one from her grieving arms.

Devastated, she throws herself into worship. During a stint in jail for her heretical beliefs, she fasts, has visions and comes to believe she and her husband have been punished by God for having sexual intercourse. She will henceforth practice and preach celibacy.

The second chapter involves Ann leading a harrowing journey across the Atlantic to establish a base in the New World. (Fastvold found a fully operational 18th-century ship, with hand-stitched sails, in Sweden.) The worshippers almost don't survive the trip.

But they arrive in New York City, somehow, two years before the American Revolution. The final act details the yearslong efforts to find

a home where the Shaker community can live safely and grow — hardly a given. Eventually the community settles upstate, where they learn to build furniture for revenue. Ann's brother William (Lewis Pullman, excellent) sets out to find followers. The community has strict rules: celibacy, no marriage, gender equality, a pursuit of utopian perfection.

But their beliefs put them in danger. A chilling final sequence has a violent mob of townspeople setting fire to a house where the group is recruiting members.

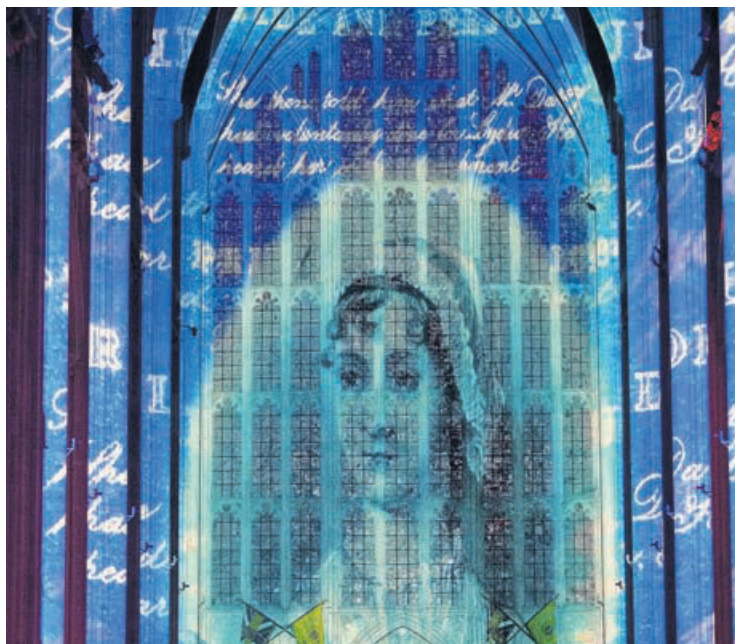
At their peak, there were thousands of Shakers. Now there are exactly three (celibacy limited the community's ability to grow.) It's not unreasonable to ask: Why put so much energy and attention and craftsmanship into telling this particular story?

Well, one answer is pretty simple: they had Seyfried. The actor spent a year before shooting simply working on her 18th-century Manchester accent. She sings, she dances. And she gives one of the rawest renderings of childbirth, and child loss, that you'll see on-screen.

No matter how you feel about the history here, it's a visceral performance that simply demands to be seen. □

## Fans celebrate Jane Austen's 250th birthday in Britain and beyond

LONDON (AP) — Fans of the acclaimed author's Jane Austen celebrated 250th birthday on Tuesday



with a church service in her home village, festive visits to her house and a virtual party for those paying tribute from afar.

Thousands of enthusiasts around the world have already taken part in a year-long celebration of one of English literature's greats, who penned "Pride and Prejudice," "Sense and Sensibility" and other beloved novels.

On Tuesday — to mark 250 years since she was born on Dec. 16, 1775 — Jane Austen's House, in the southern English village of Chawton, hosted talks, tours and performances for dozens of visitors. Celebrations concluded

with an online party for fans from all over the world. "Regency dress strongly encouraged," organizers said, adding that more than 500 people from countries as far-flung as Chile, Kazakhstan and Belarus had signed up for the Zoom party.

The cottage, now a museum with Austen artifacts, was where the author lived for the last years of her life and where she wrote all six of her novels.

"It has been an absolute joy to spend 2025 celebrating the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth. It has been a year filled with laughter, love, community

and inspiration," said Lizzie Dunford, director of Jane Austen's House. "Here's to the next 250 years."

A church service featuring music and readings was held in Steventon, the rural village where she was born. Fans, who call themselves "Janeites," have marked the anniversary year with Regency balls and festivals staged in the U.K., U.S. and beyond.

Over the weekend, the city of Bath, where Austen lived for five years, hosted the Yuletide Jane Austen Birthday Ball, the finale of many grand costumed events held there this year. □



# Mikaela Shiffrin is perfect in slalom. She's got big post-Christmas plans with Olympics approaching

By **ANDREW DAMPF**  
AP Sports Writer

Mikaela Shiffrin has plenty to celebrate this Christmas. The American skiing stand-out is off to a perfect start in slalom during the Olympic season — with four wins in four World Cup races. And she's regaining her form in other disciplines, too, following the two biggest crashes of her career.

"This season so far I had the ability to like bring top level turns in those pressure moments," Shiffrin said. "The world when they're watching thinks there's no pressure because I have a big lead or I did it the race before but every single time I stand in the start it's like a new situation and I found a way so far. I found a way to dig really deep to find that quality skiing. But it's not straightforward. It takes so much effort." This weekend, Shiffrin returns to the Austrian resort of Semmering where she's claimed seven of her record 105 World Cup victories. On two occasions, Shiffrin has claimed three victories in three days in Semmering — in 2016 and in 2022.

This season there are just two races: a giant slalom on Saturday and then a slalom on Sunday.

## Giant slalom and super-G

While Shiffrin has won a record 22 World Cup giant



United States' Mikaela Shiffrin competes in an alpine ski, women's World Cup slalom, in Courchevel, France, Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2025.

Associated Press

slaloms, she hasn't been on the podium in the discipline since before her nasty crash in Killington, Vermont, last season — which left her with a deep puncture wound in her side and severe trauma to her oblique muscles.

But Shiffrin has been getting closer in giant slalom, finishing fourth twice this season, including in the last race in Tremblant, Quebec.

"It's just going to keep taking time," she said. "I want to just keep improving or maybe get repetition from the slalom level."

Shiffrin also recently entered a super-G in St. Moritz, Switzerland, for her first speed event since crashing in a downhill in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, nearly two years ago. She was on pace for a decent finish until she missed the final gate.

Still, it was progress toward her goal of possibly adding super-G to her program at the upcoming Milan Cortina Winter Olympics — where women's Alpine skiing will be contested in Cortina.

"Even if it's not the Olympics, super-G is a big goal of mine

to return to a strong form in super-G World Cup," Shiffrin said.

## Slalom gas pedal

In slalom, Shiffrin's form is so solid that she's been able to consistently win by massive margins — an average gap of 1.5 seconds — and quickly recover from errors.

It's quite a turnaround from the second half of last season, when Shiffrin was struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder due to her fall in Killington. "Right now I can feel when I have a disruption in my momentum and

then in my mind it is like a gas pedal," she said of how she can turn up the pace mid-run. One more victory in slalom and Shiffrin will match the best start to a season in her career in the discipline: She won the first five slaloms back in 2018-19.

Overall, Shiffrin has won five straight slaloms including the final race of last season. Her longest total winning streak is seven slaloms — which she has achieved twice.

## Dream team

Already the holder of two Olympic golds — slalom in 2014 and giant slalom in 2018 — Shiffrin could race in four events at the Olympics in Cortina: slalom, giant slalom, super-G and the new team combined.

Shiffrin and downhill teammate Breezy Johnson claimed gold in team combined at last season's world championships.

The team combined involves one racer competing in a downhill run and then a teammate competing in a slalom run — with the times added together to determine the results.

Lindsey Vonn unsuccessfully campaigned to team with Shiffrin in combined at worlds but now has a better chance at forming a skiing "Dream Team" after her strong start this season at age 41. □

# College Football Playoff ratings drop 7% as NFL competition impacts viewership



The College Football Playoff logo is seen at Kyle Field before the start of a first round of the College Football Playoff game between Miami and Texas A&M on Saturday, Dec. 20, 2025, in College Station,

Associated Press

By **JOE REEDY**  
AP Sports Writer

Last weekend's first round of the College Football Playoff

averaged 9.9 million viewers on ABC, ESPN, TNT, TBS and truTV, according to ESPN and Nielson. That is a 7% drop from last year.

A big reason for the drop was that the final game, James Madison versus Oregon, was on TNT, TBS and truTV and not on ABC and ESPN, along with an NFL game in prime time.

The Chicago Bears' 22-16 overtime victory over the Green Bay Packers on Fox averaged 21.3 million viewers while Oregon's 51-34 win over James Madison drew 4.4 million. Last year's Ohio State-Tennessee game on

ABC/ESPN averaged 14.3 million, plus it did not go up against an NFL game.

The most-watched CFP game was Alabama's 34-24 comeback victory over Oklahoma, which averaged 14.9 million on a Friday night on ABC/ESPN.

Not only was that the highest-viewed CFP first-round game in the two years of the expanded 12-team field, it was the fifth-most watched game of the season. Six of the top 20 most-viewed games this year involve Alabama.

Last year's CFP opener between Notre Dame and In-

diana averaged 13.4 million. Miami's 10-7 win over Texas A&M averaged 14.8 million on ABC/ESPN on Saturday afternoon and more than doubled the 6.4 million that tuned in for the SMU-Penn State game in the same time slot on TNT/TBS and truTV.

The Hurricanes' victory was the sixth-most watched game of the season.

Ole Miss' 41-10 rout of Tulane averaged 6.2 million on TNT/TBS and truTV, down from the 8.6 million average from last year's Texas-Clemson game in the same time slot and networks. □



# Lions are out of the playoff race, Packers are among 11 teams in and 3 spots remain open

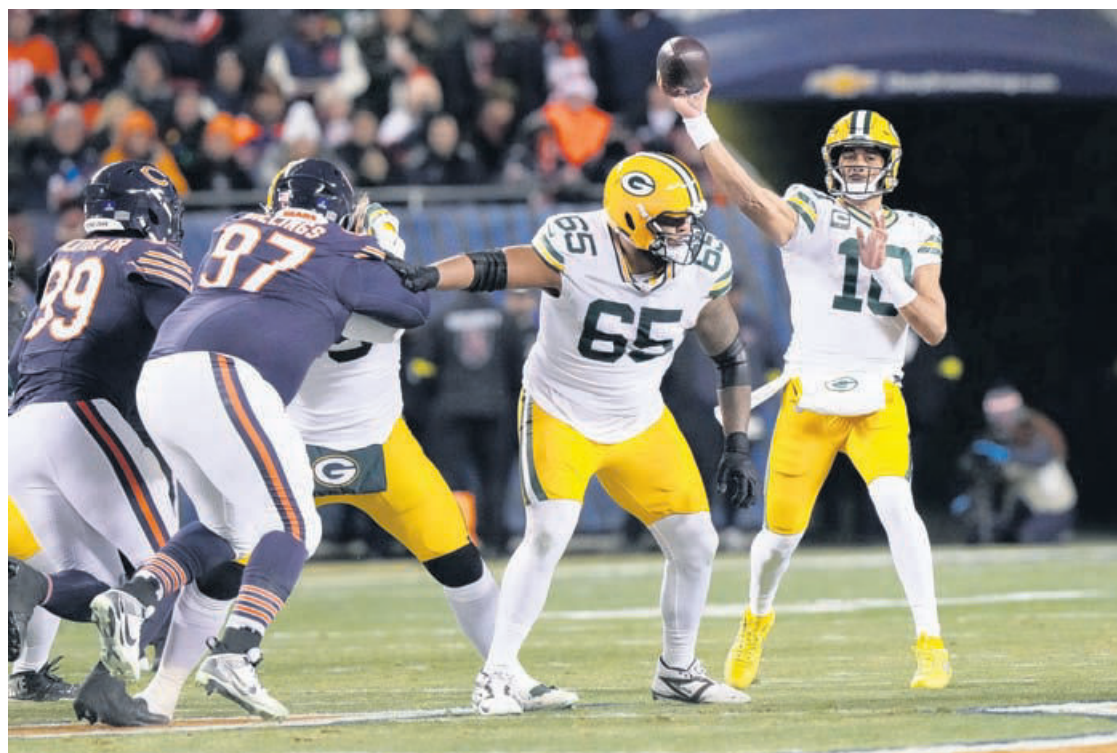
By **ROB MAADDI**  
AP Pro Football Writer

The Lions are staying home for the playoffs, the Packers are in the postseason and only one spot remains open in the NFC. Detroit's dismal performance in a 23-10 loss to Minnesota on Christmas Day eliminated the Lions (8-8) and allowed Green Bay (9-5-1) to clinch at least a wild-card berth. The Packers join the NFC East champion Eagles (10-5), the Bears (11-5), Seahawks (12-3), 49ers (11-4) and Rams (11-4). The Panthers (8-7) and Buccaneers (7-8) are battling for the final playoff spot in the NFC. Denver's 20-13 victory over Kansas City on Thursday night moved the Broncos (13-3) closer toward securing the AFC West and the No. 1 seed. The Patriots (12-3), Bills (11-4), Jaguars (11-4) and Chargers (11-4) also have clinched playoff spots. The Texans (10-5), Steelers (9-6), Colts (8-7) and Ravens (7-8) are fighting for the last two spots in the AFC.

The opening game of the NFL's holiday tripleheader had no impact on the playoffs. Dak Prescott and the Dallas Cowboys beat the Washington Commanders 30-23.

## AFC East

New England clinches with



Green Bay Packers' Jordan Love throws during the first half of an NFL football game against the Chicago Bears Saturday, Dec. 20, 2025, in Chicago.

Associated Press

a win over the Jets and a loss or tie by Buffalo or a tie against New York and loss by the Bills.

Buffalo would clinch with victories over Philadelphia and the Jets and if the Patriots lose to either the Jets or Dolphins.

## AFC North

The Steelers clinch with a win or tie against the Browns or if the Ravens lose or tie the Packers on Saturday night. The Ravens would clinch if Pittsburgh loses to Cleveland and they beat Green Bay and the Steelers

in the final two games.

## AFC South

Jacksonville clinches with a win over Indianapolis and a loss or tie by Houston or a tie against the Colts and a loss by the Texans.

Houston needs a win or tie over the Chargers or a loss or tie by the Colts to clinch a playoff spot. The Texans can win the division with victories over the Chargers and Colts in the final two games and one loss by the Jaguars against Indianapolis or Tennessee.

The Colts can't win the di-

vision. They need Houston to lose to the Los Angeles Chargers on Saturday to stay alive. Indianapolis then has to beat Jacksonville on Sunday and the Texans next week to earn a wild-card spot.

## AFC West

The Broncos clinch if the Chargers lose or tie Houston. Denver can also secure the AFC's No. 1 seed this weekend if the Chargers lose or tie and the Patriots lose and the Bills lose or tie and the Jaguars lose or tie.

## NFC East

The defending Super Bowl champion Eagles became the first team to win this division in consecutive seasons in two decades. They'll be the NFC's No. 2, 3 or 4 seed. NFC North Chicago clinches with a win over San Francisco, a loss by Green Bay or if both teams tie.

The Packers have to win their final two games against the Ravens and Vikings and the Bears would have go 0-2 or 0-1-1 for Green Bay to win the division.

## NFC South

Carolina clinches with a win over Seattle and a loss or tie by Tampa Bay. The Buccaneers clinch with victories over Miami and the Panthers in the final two games.

## NFC West

The Seahawks clinch the division with a victory over Carolina and a loss or tie by the Rams and a loss or tie by the 49ers or a tie against the Panthers and losses by the Rams and 49ers.

The 49ers would clinch the division and the No. 1 seed if they beat the Bears and Seahawks in their final two games at home. The Rams still have a path to a division crown, but must finish with a better record than both Seattle and San Francisco. □



CEO of Scooter's Coffee Joe Thornton, left, presents the winner's trophy to Ohio interim head coach John Hauser after the Frisco Bowl NCAA college football game against UNLV Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2025, in Frisco, Texas.

Associated Press

ATHENS, Ohio (AP) — John Hauser will be Ohio University's head coach after having the interim tag removed on Friday. Hauser was named the interim coach on Dec. 1 and

led the Bobcats to a 17-10 victory over UNLV in the Frisco Bowl on Tuesday. Ohio was in the market for a coach after it fired Brian Smith on Dec. 18 for what it called "serious professional

# Ohio University promotes John Hauser to head coach after the Bobcats' Frisco Bowl victory

misconduct." That included having a four-month affair with an undergraduate student while he was getting a divorce.

Hauser came to Ohio in 2022 as safeties coach. He was promoted to defensive passing game coordinator in 2023 and defensive coordinator before the 2024 season. Hauser also was the associate head coach this season.

"Over the past four seasons, Ohio football has won 40 games, and John is a key piece in all that goes into

our winning program. Additionally, he's a proven leader, and his focus will be on the student-athlete experience, both on and off the field," athletic director Slade Larscheid said in a statement.

The Bobcats (9-4) allowed only 295.2 yards per game this season, eighth best in the Football Bowl Subdivision. The 17.46 points allowed per game was 11th nationally.

"This is a special place for my family and me, and we are proud to be part of a

community that cares so deeply about Ohio University and its football program," Hauser said in a statement. "I look forward to hitting the ground running with the team as we look to build on the program's tradition of success in 2026 and beyond."

Ohio will open the 2026 season at Nebraska on Sept. 5. Hauser will be OU's third coach in three seasons. Tim Albin left to become the coach at Charlotte after the 2024 season, and Smith was promoted. □